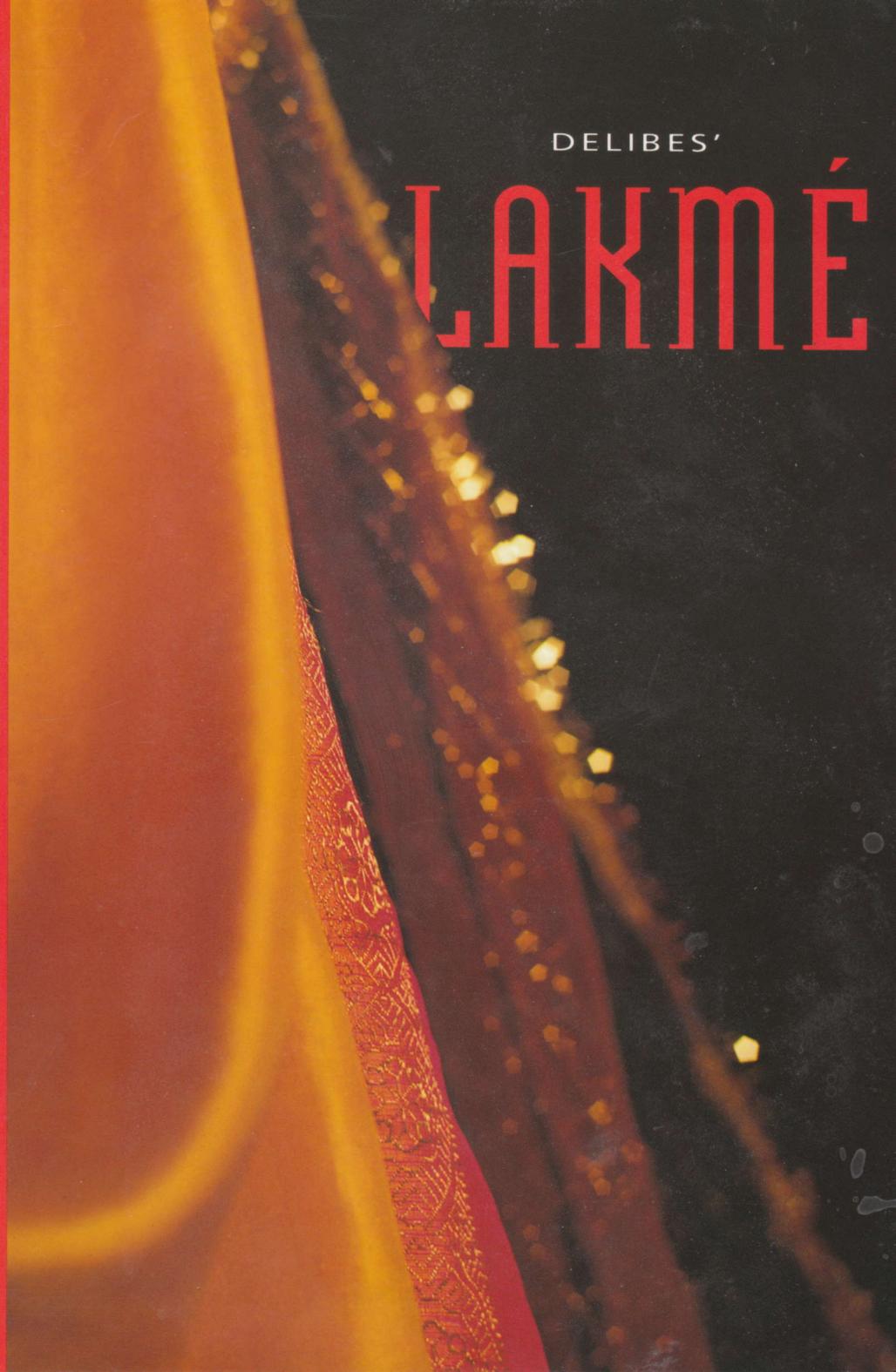


Lakmé • Léo Delibes

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2, 4, 6 December 1993

There will be two intervals

Lakmé was first performed at
The Paris Opéra Comique on 14th April 1883.





Léo Delibes

CAST

<i>Lakmé</i>	Elizabeth Futral
<i>Mallika</i>	Kate McCarney
<i>Ellen</i>	Mary Callan Clarke
<i>Rose</i>	Roisin McGibbon
<i>Mistress Bentson</i>	Meriel Dickinson
<i>Gérald</i>	Donald George
<i>Nilakantha</i>	Georgi Selesnev
<i>Frédéric</i>	Mark Pedrotti
<i>Hadjî</i>	Ya Lin Zhang
<i>A Fortune Teller</i>	Grant Shelley
<i>A Thief</i>	David Campbell
<i>A Bangle Merchant</i>	James Drummond-Nelson
<i>Solo Dancers</i>	Ella Clarke, Fiona Fitzgerald, Liz Roache
<i>Assistant Conductor</i>	Igor Kennaway
<i>Répétiteur</i>	Gerald Martin Moore
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Nora Ni Cosgraign
<i>Assistant Stage Managers</i>	Mary Baltrop Timothy Follett



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SYNOPSIS

ACT I

In the secret refuge of the rebellious Brahmin priest Nilakantha, who has been forbidden to practice his religion by the British, the faithful Indians gather to worship. While Nilakantha anticipates his vengeance against the British, his daughter, Lakmé, the maiden priestess prays to the deities Durga, Siva and Ganessa. Nilakantha informs Lakmé that he must go to town to arrange the religious festival and procession, which fall on the morrow. He entrusts her care to their faithful servants, Mallika and Hadji. Lakmé and Mallika go to gather flowers by the stream. Two young English sisters, Ellen and Rose, innocently break into the secret refuge, followed by their governess Mistress Bentson and two army officers, Gérald and Frédéric. Gérald thinks it is all a great joke, but Frédéric warns the others that their trespassing is fraught with danger. When Ellen remarks that there is nothing sinister about the beautiful flowers in the garden, he reminds her that the exquisite datura flower, carries a deadly poison. They discuss the custom of locking away such a reputedly beautiful creature as Lakmé from men's eyes, and theorise on the differences between Indian and European women. Frédéric denies what the others maintain: women everywhere are the same in love. The Indian woman knows no restraint and love with her may end in disaster.

Rose finds some of Lakmé's jewels. Ellen is enchanted by the necklace and Gérald, despite Frédéric's warnings, stays behind to sketch them, so they can be copied, and Ellen, to whom he is engaged, can wear them on their wedding day. Left alone Gérald,

entranced by the atmosphere, and intrigued by the jewelry, wonders at the beauty of its owner, but quickly hides as Lakmé returns. Having placed flowers before the altar with a prayer, Mallika leaves Lakmé who sings of her new strange, mixed emotions. Seeing Gérald, she cries for help, but, when Hadji and Mallika come, she sends them away. Alone with Gérald she urges him to leave; she is a daughter of the gods, and his presence in the sanctuary will be punished by death if he is found. Gérald, struck by her charm and beauty, declares his passion and Lakmé admits to herself that he is arousing new emotions. Gérald convinces her that this is love. Lakmé sees her father returning and begs Gérald to leave, just in time to prevent Nilakantha from catching him. The priest vows vengeance for the outrage.

INTERVAL

ACT II

In the town market Mistress Bentson is being pestered by a fortune-teller and several street sellers. To her consternation, she is relieved of her handkerchief and watch, before a bell rings announcing the market's closure and the start of the festival.

Temple dancers start the festivities with a celebration of Durga. Nilakantha and Lakmé appear disguised as a penitent and his daughter. Nilakantha sings tenderly of his love for Lakmé, having reprimanded her for suggesting that Brahma might pardon the offence of a stranger. His plan is to attract the intruder by persuading Lakmé to sing an Indian Folk Legend. The 'Bell Song' is the story of an Indian maiden who protects a handsome stranger from the



Sketch of scene from Act 2 in the original production of *Lakmé* at the Opéra Comique in Paris 1883.

wild beasts of the forest by playing upon her bells. The stranger turns out to be Vishnu, son of Brahma and she is taken with him to the skies. But Gérald fails to appear and Nilakantha urges his daughter to continue. Suddenly Gérald arrives and betrays himself by recognising Lakmé. As the British soldiers are called to assemble, Frédéric succeeds in dragging Gérald away. Nilakantha and his fellow conspirators make plans to kill Gérald during the religious procession that night. Hadji reminds Lakmé of the services he has rendered her in childhood and tells her he is just as willing now to sacrifice his life to serve her. Gérald returns in search of Lakmé. She tells him that, if only he shared her religious beliefs, all Hindi would be obliged to protect him. She tells him of her retreat in the forest where she would take him to live and love forever.

The festivities celebrating Durga continue and Lakmé conceals herself; Rose, Ellen and Mistress Benton drift back. Frédéric rejoins his friend and reminds him that their regiment is due to leave on active service on the morrow. As the procession goes by, the conspirators isolate Gérald and Nilakantha stabs him. Lakmé cries out, but discovers that Gérald is not fatally wounded. She exults that her lover will be hers now for ever.

ACT III

Hadji has brought Gérald to the secret retreat. Lakmé sings to the sleeping Gérald. He wakes and she explains his rescue. He sings of his intense happiness at being alone with her, sheltered from the rest of the world. Singing is heard and Lakmé tells Gérald that it is the sound of lovers on their way to the sacred spring. The drinking of its waters

LAKMÉ

from one cup unites lovers forever. They cannot go down to the spring together for fear of discovery but she will go and bring back the water for them. No sooner has she gone, than Frédéric appears. He has been guided by traces of blood and found his way to their hiding place. He urges his friend to return to the path of duty and not sacrifice his future for the passing passion of an Indian girl. Gérald replies that Lakmé's feeling for him is real love. Frédéric reminds him of Ellen to no purpose, but a final appeal to duty - the regiment leaves in an hour - wins the promise he desires. Frédéric leaves, Lakmé returns and is struck by a change in Gérald. His reaction to soldiers' voices singing in the distance convinces her

that her lover's patriotism is stronger than his love for her. Without his noticing, she bites into the poisonous datura flower. Gérald swears he will be hers for ever and they drink of the sacred waters before Lakmé reveals that she is dying. Nilakantha enters and threatens to kill Gérald. Lakmé tells him that they have partaken of the sacred waters together. The Brahmin is forced to stay his hand as Gérald is now considered sacred to him and all Hindis. Lakmé offers herself as an expiatory victim to the gods; Nilakantha is exalted with the thought that Lakmé is now with the gods.

PEGGIE COCHRANE

Lakmé and Gérald Duet from Act three, Opéra Comique in Paris 1883.



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LAKMÉ – A PERSONAL NOTE BY AN ENTHUSIAST

There is one mark by which you can always distinguish a true opera lover: that is, the irritation he will evince when some fatuous philistine dismisses an opera on the ground of 'hating' some hackneyed number (hackneyed because good quite often, though not always). You know the kind of observation. 'Trovatore? Isn't that the thing with that awful Anvil Chorus in it? Or 'Offenbach - did he write that lugubrious Barcarolle?

Beware of the fool who writes off *Lakmé* as 'that irritating Bell Song' which no doubt has been sung too often and out of context in many a seaside concert. But in its context it is not only apt - a dramatic narrative used by the singer as a way of warning her lover in the audience - her audience on stage, a party of English in India) it is both exciting and beautiful. The opening from "*Où va la jeune hindoue, fille des pariahs*" up to the dreamy melismata which proceeds the clochettes' whizz bang section is mysterious and alluring in a way which Delibes made personal enough to be instantly recognisable as his own: an orientalism, to be sure, of its own time and place, of the France which was newly enamoured of the east as experienced by the heroes of Pierre Loti (usually, one thinks, Loti himself) who came under the spell of 'dusky' self-sacrificing heroines.

Lakmé dates from later than the two superb ballet scores *Coppélia* and *Sylvia* which have kept Delibes' name alive all these years in countless theatres. Between these he had written *Le Roi l'a dit* (1873). But *Lakmé* ten years later was the masterpiece. It may fairly be said that its orientalism is not consistent; but then may not the same be said of the eastern or local colour operas of Verdi, Puccini

and others? There are passages - take the love duet for tenor (English soldier of Her Majesty) and the native maiden *Lakmé*: 'C'est le dieu de la jeunesse' which is as instantly recognisable as second half nineteenth century opéra-comique as the duet between Micaela and Don José in the first act of *Carmen*. But just as the English characters, Gerald, a hero so much nicer than Pinkerton and Mistress (sic) Bentson, 'la venerable Mistress Bentson' at one moment and the epitome of the English governess shocked by foreign goings on, are characterised in terms of French music to the happiest effect, so the orientalism of the temple dances, the invocation of the goddess Dourga, the suggestions of exotic are finely nuanced and though like everything good much copied since, they must have sounded highly original on their first appearance.



Maria Van Zandt the creator of *Lakm *

Likewise the character of the heroine herself - and here it is really necessary to forget all the brassy not to say brazenly assured sopranos whom you have heard giving the Bell song 'the works' - and turn to two of *Lakm *'s solos. The first

LAKMÉ

where she wonders why she is both troubled and happy is *Pourquoi dans les grands bois?* It is tender, deeply expressive, turned with what any Francophile or any fair minded person at all will recognise as French grace (a quality in short supply and out of fashion but a quality for all that). The other is the lullaby at the start of the last act where Lakmé is nursing her western lover: *Sous le ciel tout étoilé*, original, touching and beautiful, and a revelation to those who need their assessment of Delibes resettled. Moreover it is perfectly planned for a French voice which may be happier with the effects of a soft upper pianissimo than with your Italian *tutta forza*. In passing, too, note the beguiling elegance, symmetry (suitable, since he is singing about the mysterious appeal of Indian art) of Gerald's *Fantaisie aux divins mensonges*.

If you have a fairly wide perspective of French opera to look back on, the aforementioned lullaby may well put you in mind of another solicitous, non European, devoted heroine who also does the decent thing and takes poison thereby releasing her captive lover: I refer to Suleika (or Selida), not Max's Miss Dobson, nor the lady who was given glorious songs by Schubert and Wolf, but to the soprano who gives her name to Meyerbeer's posthumous *L'Africaine*. Her man was no less than Vasco da Gama, a bigger fish and a robuster voice than Sandhurst Gerald for whom Lakmé is merely an Indian 'incident' and will marry his Ellen and live happily ever after though perhaps not without a wistful memory or two. I am not saying that Delibes or his librettist Godinet, working from a Loti original (as much in vogue as the Japanese fans and willow



Lily Pons as Lakmé

pattern plates you see in Whistler interiors) consciously went back to Meyerbeer. But Lakmé herself is nevertheless something of a bridge character between the world of *L'Africaine* and Puccini's heart-rending *Madama Butterfly*. (To simplify, we had better omit another Madame, Chrysanthème, though she too was of the same lineage and is worth pursuit if time allows).

I would draw attention to the craftsmanship not merely of the music which is a joy and befits the reputation of one who became chief instructor in counterpoint in Paris, but also the 'know-how' of catching and relaxing an audience's attention: an art perfected by Massenet (who incidentally learned much from Delibes and finished a posthumous work 'Kassya' for him). Everything seems the right length. The emphasis is never lopsided or clumsy.

LAKMÉ

'Charm' 'excitement' 'amorous fervour,' all these moods, like the numbers, duet, ensemble, solo (in telling position) are organised in a most satisfying manner. It is not of course 'like life' it is indeed pre-verismo, but once accepted as a vehicle for a certain sort of drama in music, viz opéra comique, it never stumbles or disconcerts its hearers. I think these are virtues easily underrated. May I recall to balletomanes (who may be interested since Delibes is more than a name to many of them), that there was a time when such a glorious, limpid, naive masterpiece as Adam's *Giselle* used to be smiled out of court as merely 'pretty'? Fashions change.

The opera was long associated with Marie Van Zandt who 'created it' – as they tiresomely say – in Paris, in London and even in New York was singing it with Edouard de Reszke as the villainous father. Mlle. Van Zandt had an oriental look: "Lakmé, ton doux regard" seemed

deeply appropriate. But I am not sure that when Tetrazzini splendidly took it over at Covent Garden (1910 with McCormack) the well known picture of her as a matronly *jeune hindoue* really did the reputation of the opera much good. Lily Pons, the so called pocket soprano, cut Lakmé down to size again: she was good but I always thought she rushed her fences. The late Mado Robin at the Opéra Comique used somehow to get in a G in altissimo which made us all sit up, not without a certain discomfort either, but as I suggested earlier that is not the point: listen rather to the modulations in "Pourquoi...je me sens heureuse?" Lakmé can be an operatic heroine to cherish alongside Tatiana and Louise, I perceive that I shall not now fall out of love with her.

PHILIP HOPE WALLACE

*Reprinted from the 1970
Wexford Festival Opera Programme*

Luisa Tetrazzini as Lakmé



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LAKMÉ – THE TWAIN MEET

Some music historians and mainstream opera houses prefer to think of Léo Delibes (1836–91) as just a ballet composer. Other music-lovers, ambitious smaller companies and (most recently) cinema-goers suspect that this opinion is a conspiracy to cheat them of what a recent film journal quixotically dubbed ‘Lakmania’.¹ Delibes’s last completed full-scale opera was premiered at Léon Carvalho’s Opéra Comique on 14 April 1883. ‘Le tout Paris’ in the audience that night included the composers Ambroise Thomas and Ernest Reyer, the librettists Meilhac and Halévy and the younger Alexandre Dumas. With the noted exception of the perhaps not impartial Reyer they, the critics and the public were impressed by the result. Reyer scoffed at the heroine’s soon-to-be-famous Bell song where ‘the voice has an advantageous struggle with a kind of harmonica’ and deemed the principal interest of the chorus of lovers visiting the sacred spring in Act 3 to be the fact that it was off-stage. But in general Delibes was praised for returning to the more serious genre that he had abandoned after *Le Roi l'a dit* (1873) and – importantly for a French composer writing in the year of Wagner’s death – for his ‘purely French’ resistance to foreign influences. Four years after Delibes’s death the work attained its 200th performance at the Opéra Comique alone and had already travelled to the world’s major houses.

Yet as a repertory opera in the latter part of the 20th century, *Lakmé* is almost

in danger of extinction. There has been a significant lack of major productions in recent years – and, despite almost obsessive interest by record companies in romantic scores, no new commercial recording issued since 1971. Why? In terms of fashion *Lakmé* has almost everything going against it. Overnight successes feature large in opera’s casualty lists. The title role, created for and by Marie Van Zandt, soon came to appear precariously specialist – a teenage priestess who needed the range of a Queen of Night for just one aria (and some optional notes) in a long role that mostly demands a lower and more dramatic voice. The libretto treats a subject for which European fascination in the heyday of imperialist expansion would turn in the 20th century to embarrassment and even active condemnation. Colonial-power military man meets native girl for stolen days of love without responsibility. He is called away by ‘duty’ and his flag. Consequence: a young innocent life ruined and normally lost. Some 20 years later even a composer as apolitical as Puccini would adopt a mildly critical stance in handling the parallel material of *Madama Butterfly*. Superficially *Lakmé* conforms to many of the clichés of this West-meets-East genre. Formulaic stage directions call for hidden temples, distant pagodas, market places teeming with an assortment of Oriental races, religious statuary and ‘all the flowers of India’. Beautiful virgin priestesses go boating on sacred waters (singing a duet that has recently helped promote airline ticket sales) and British officers discuss Kiplingesque strategy with lines like ‘the regiment leaves at dawn’. There is even the obligatory Act 2 ballet of ‘native’ dancers.

1. Donald Fagan in *Premier*, January 1988, notes at least four recent films which have employed music from *Lakmé* on their soundtrack. They include the much-praised Canadian *I've Heard the Mermaid's Singing*.

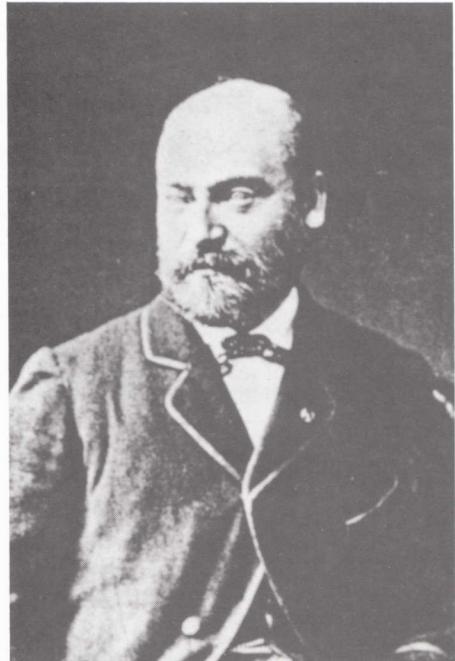
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Delibes was no boy genius, but he was writing box-office successes for the lyric stage before he was 20. (*Deux Sous de charbon* was premiered at Paris's Folies Nouvelles in 1856.) From 1863 to 1872 he was on the music staff at the Opéra first as répétiteur, then as second chorus-master. During this time he helped prepare the premieres of *Les Pêcheurs de perles* and *Faust*. The latter collaboration is noteworthy mostly because some commentators have suggested that Delibes actually wrote Gounod's ballet music; the former collaboration was to prove an obvious shaping influence on *Lakmé*.

Although it lacks a racial conflict, Bizet's opera is also a three-hander in which a young lover invades the

sanctuary of a virgin priestess and declares love for her, which results in the threat of death at the hands of a high priest. The major flaws in *Pêcheurs de perles* are probably the excess of dramatically unmotivated local colour, a first act that does little but hint at conflicts to come and a last-act dénouement that (Nahum Tate-like) turns certain tragedy into improbable happy ending. As in Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* (another dramatic influence on *Lakmé*) Bizet's librettists loaded their fragile structure with conflicting (and frankly clichéd) emotional tussles that muddy dramatic focus.

Delibes was able to profit mightily from his first-hand experience of other 'colonial' operas in rehearsal. He had



Philippe Gille



Edmonde Gondinet

LAKMÉ

collaborated with both Gondinet and Gilles previously and was able to persuade them that a libretto based on Pierre Loti's smash-hit novelette *Le Mariage de Loti* (1880) might have drawbacks.² Loti's semi-autobiographical work – enshrining the casually racist attitude of the privileged white tourist – was certainly a catalyst to the *Lakmé* project. But all it has in common with the finished libretto is the archetypal meeting of European officer and native girl – and perhaps a very subtle hint as to the unreal paradise of Delibes's Act 3. Loti tells of a Tahiti in which idle and patronising days spent with the local royal family are enlivened, almost as the result of a dinner-table joke, by an almost paedophilic relationship between a narrator (Loti) and a proud young native girl, Rarahu. Loti sails away, hoping in dreams that no misfortune will come to his young, not-quite lover.

The libretto moves the location to British-occupied India – a favourite *bête noire* of then contemporary French public opinion which thus provided the writers with a politically acceptable opportunity to criticise the representatives of a European colonial power. The violation of a local religion is given an added edge by the fact that the Brahmin Nilakantha (*Lakmé*'s father) is fighting to preserve a sect that has been outlawed by the occupying power.

2. Pierre Loti was the *nom de plume* of Julien Viaud (1850-1923), a French naval officer who published some 40 volumes of travel sketches and autobiographical novels. Based mostly on his service travels in the Middle and Far East, they helped feed a popular demand for easy reading about the exotic far corners of a potential new empire.

Gérald's fascination with the young priestess *Lakmé*, and her growing love for him, thus takes on the added colour of fraternising with an enemy. His potential desertion from the colours is a more lethal affair than José's running away to become a smuggler. (Just as in *Carmen* military music off-stage – in Delibes a chorus in Act 3 – demands the return of an errant lover to duty.³)

Delibes and his librettists had strengthened the political backbone of their chosen subject matter. They now proceeded to enrich the profiles of potentially stock characters, drawing again on their experience of previous operas. Bizet's Zurga and Nourabad – the jealous friend caught between love and duty and the fanatical high priest – were profitably combined in the sole figure of Nilakantha. His infectious energy as a revolutionary religious leader was counterpointed by a relationship with his daughter of Verdian psychological complexity. As with Rigoletto or Giorgio Germont, protective love and idolisation of his child will have tragic consequences. This extra dimension is encapsulated in no less a high point of the score than the Bell Song itself. Nilakantha quite literally puts his daughter on the stage to perform in the hope that her act will entice her mysterious infidel lover to reveal himself.

Lakmé herself receives a far more rounded portrayal in words and music than her dramatic predecessors Leila or Selika. She does not automatically fall in love at first sight and remains aware of

3. Another obvious echo of Bizet's opera comes in the market scene which opens Delibes's Act 2 where the goods for sale and the voices that hawk them are in the same tradition as the bullfight crowd in Seville.

LAKMÉ

the important religious gap between her and Gérald. Her spiriting of him away to an almost impossible paradise hideaway evokes the genuine *naïveté* of *Paul et Virginie*: she is primarily concerned for Gérald's safety.⁴ Even when she falls into the temptation of trying to 'convert' him, her attempt is limited to the shared drinking of water from a holy spring which assures his immunity from sectarian vendetta. Gérald is a direct descendant of Bizet's Nadir and Don José. In the last two acts of *Carmen* Meilhac and Halévy provided Bizet with a frighteningly accurate portrayal of male paranoia and delusion. Much of this rubbed off well on Gérald, for whom Lakmé remains little more than a visual realisation of the necklace he has stayed to sketch when they first meet. Her religion remains an exotic curiosity for him. He is the perfect Pierre Loti hero; like his successor Pinkerton (derived at least indirectly, from Loti's later novelette *Madame Chrysanthème*) Gérald at the climax of the drama ends up in the wrong place at the wrong time providing a genuinely tragic frisson.

The fun that Delibes and his team were able to have at the expense of 'les miss anglaises' and their dragon of a governess 'Mistress' Bentson has dated well. An inspired use of the rules of *opéra comique* provides for only the Brits to

4. *Paul et Virginie*, the pastoral novel by Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, was first published in 1788 and was hugely popular in both France and England. It relates the childhood adolescence and growing love of a French boy and girl on the island of Mauritius and helped set a trend for romantic visions of 'civilised' peoples in a nobly 'savage' environment. An operatic setting by Le Sueur (1794) was an early success of the Revolutionary period.

speak. Their intrusion into the forbidden precinct of Nilakantha's hidden temple comes via a welter of trivial dialogue, a marvellous contrast to the lushness of the Lakmé-Mallika river duet. Their first intrusion into song – a quintet, of course – is a close cousin of Bizet's 'Nous avons entée une affaire...'. Later, La Bentson with her 'Oh shocking' reaction to the temple dancers remains wholly comic: Ellen and Rose (intentionally) are just ciphers; Frédéric pours a rational John Bull view into Gérald's deaf ear.

Delibes's *Lakmé* is hardly a revolutionary watershed for opera in dramatic or indeed in musical terms: it sticks to well-established codes but employs them with a superbly professional appreciation of form. It is also an important (and too long submerged) link in a chain of works by which *opéra comique* form was able to revitalise the rather imitative and moribund genre of French *grand opéra* and thus prepare the ground for Massenet, Charpentier and even Debussy. Despite the understandable chauvinism of contemporary critics there are Wagnerian shadows in *Lakmé*: a minimal use of leitmotif technique being perhaps less relevant here than the concentrated otherworldliness of Act 3 with its suggestion of a transforming redemptive power in Lakmé's sacrificial suicide. Most intriguing, though, is the work's state-of-the-art treatment of the popular genre subject of East meets West – romanticised, certainly, but nearly always managing to rise above banal pictorialism or patronising racist cliché.

MIKE ASHMAN

Reprinted from Opera Magazine

DELIBES' **LAKMÉ**



Lakmé, Sigrid Arnoldson (1891)

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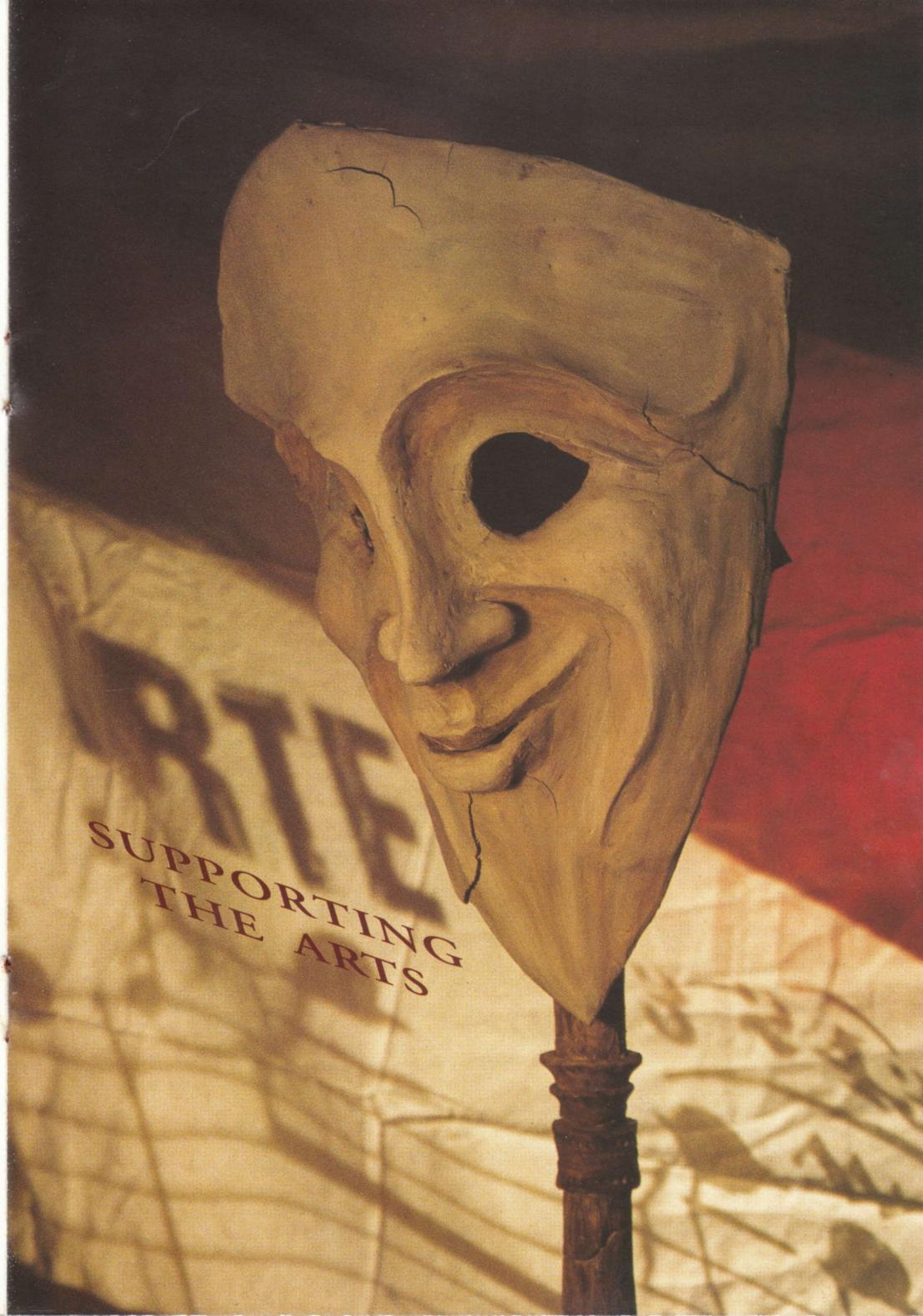
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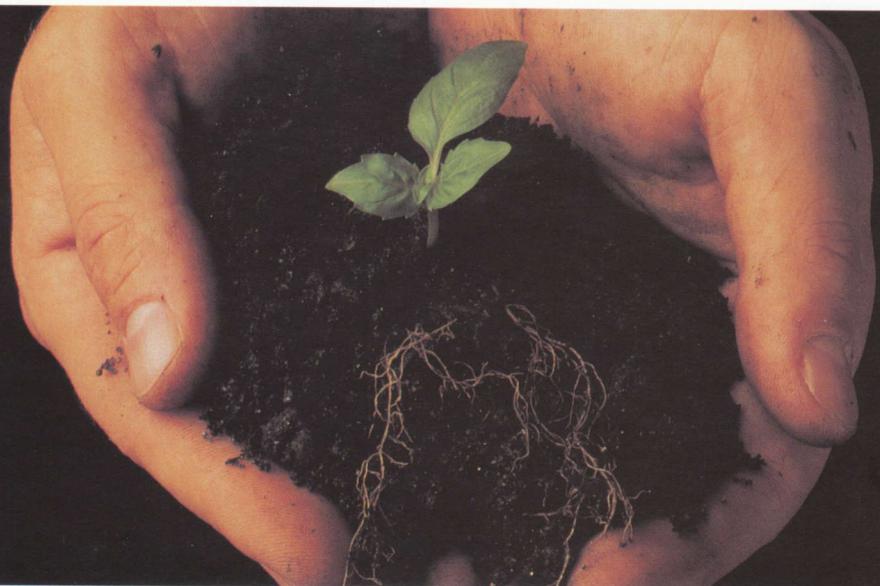
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DGOS OPERA IRELAND PRODUCTIONS 1941-1993

Dates indicate the first and most recent DGOS Opera Ireland productions.

Salvatore Allegra		Christoph W Gluck		Gioacchino Rossini
Ave Maria	1959	Orfeo ed Euridice	1960, 1986	Il barbiere di Siviglia
Medico suo malgrado	1962	Charles Gounod		La Cenerentola
Michael W Balfe		Faust	1941, 1980	L'Italiana in Algeri
The Bohemian Girl	1943	Roméo et Juliette	1945	Camille Saint-Saëns
Ludwig van Beethoven		George F Handel		Samson and Delilah
Fidelio	1954, 1980	Messiah	1942	Bedrich Smetana
Vincenzo Bellini		Engelbert Humperdinck		The Bartered Bride
La sonnambula	1960, 1963	Hansel and Gretel	1942, 1982	Johann Strauss
Norma	1955, 1989	Leos Janacek		Die Fledermaus
I Puritani	1975	Jenufa	1973	Der Zigeunerbaron
Benjamin Britten		Ruggiero Leoncavallo		Richard Strauss
Peter Grimes	1990	I Pagliacci	1941, 1973	Der Rosenkavalier
Georges Bizet		Pietro Mascagni		Ambroise Thomas
Carmen	1941, 1989	L'amico Fritz	1952	Mignon
Les pêcheurs de perles	1964, 1987	Cavalleria rusticana	1941, 1973	Peter Illich Tchaikovsky
Gustave Charpentier		Jules Massenet		Eugene Onegin
Louise	1979	Manon	1952, 1980	The Queen of Spades
Francesco Cilea		Werther	1967, 1977	Giuseppe Verdi
Adriana Lecouvreur	1967, 1980	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart		Aida
Domenico Cimarosa		Così fan tutte	1950, 1993	Un ballo in maschera
Il matrimonio segreto	1961	Don Giovanni	1943, 1990	Don Carlos
Claude Debussy		Idomeneo	1956	Ernani
Pelléas et Mélisande	1948	Il Seraglio	1949, 1964	Falstaff
Léo Delibes		Le nozze di Figaro	1942, 1991	La forza del destino
Lakmé	1993	The Magic Flute	1990	Macbeth
Gaetano Donizetti		Jacques Offenbach		Nabucco
Don Pasquale	1952, 1987	Tales of Hoffmann	1944, 1979	Otello
L'elisir d'amore	1958, 1987	Amilcare Ponchielli		Rigoletto
La Favorita	1942, 1982	La Gioconda	1944, 1984	Simon Boccanegra
La Figlia del Reggimento	1978	Giacomo Puccini		La Traviata
Lucia di Lammermoor	1955, 1991	La Bohème	1941, 1993	Il Trovatore
Friedrich von Flotow		Gianni Schicchi	1962	
Martha	1982, 1992	Madama Butterfly	1942, 1993	Gerard Victory
Umberto Giordano		Manon Lescaut	1958, 1991	Music Hath Mischief
Andrea Chénier	1957, 1983	Suor Angelica	1962	1968
Fedora	1959	Tosca	1941, 1990	Richard Wagner
		Turandot	1957, 1986	The Flying Dutchman
		Licinio Refice		Lohengrin
		Cecilia	1954	Tannhäuser
				Tristan und Isolde
				Die Walküre
				Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari
				Il segreto di Susanna
				1956

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BIOGRAPHIES

ELAINE PADMORE – Artistic Director

In her fifth season as Artistic Director of DGOS Opera Ireland, following two seasons as guest director in 1989-90. Has been Artistic Director of Wexford Festival Opera since 1982. She studied music at Birmingham

University and then held a scholarship at the Guildhall School. She freelanced as a singer, répétiteur, writer and lecturer. After a period as editor at the Oxford University Press she wrote a book on Wagner, became lecturer in opera at the Royal Academy of Music, and began to give broadcast talks.

She joined the BBC as a music programmes producer and until 1982 held the post of Head of Opera, in charge of the planning and production of opera broadcasts.

Well-known as a "golden voice" of Radio 3 until 1991, she became Artistic Director for Classical Productions London (touring arena productions of *Tosca* and *Carmen* originating at Earls Court), was Artistic

Consultant for the 1992 London Opera Festival and has recently been appointed Director of the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen, where she now lives.

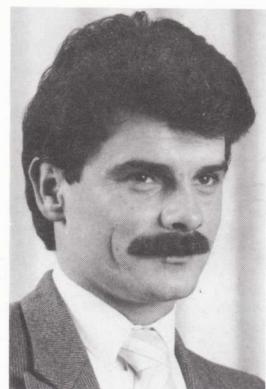


DAVID COLLOPY – Administrator

David is the most experienced opera administrator in Ireland. An accountant by profession, he joined Wexford Festival Opera in 1980. During

his time there, he played a large part in developing the Festival into an operatic event which now enjoys wide international acclaim. Following a period spent working in a London based design consultancy, he joined the then D.G.O.S. in 1985 as their first professional administrator and has been instrumental in transforming the organisation into a highly professional unit.

His commitment to increase the level of private sector funding for the company is reflected in the growth of commercial sponsorship in recent times, funds which assist greatly in fulfilling his ambition to broaden the art-form by bringing opera to the greatest number of people.



IGOR KENNAWAY – Chorus Master/Assistant Conductor

From 1976 to 1984, Igor Kennaway held conducting appointments at the opera houses of Osnabrück, Mannheim and Mainz and appeared as Guest Conductor at the Koblenz and Darmstadt opera houses. Between 1984 and

1986 he was Sir Georg Solti's Musical Assistant. In 1987 he became Assistant Chorus Master at Bayreuth and in 1990 was appointed Daniel Barenboim's Assistant for the Bayreuth 'Ring'. In 1989, he became guest

Conductor at the Stuttgart State Opera. Between 1989 and 1991 he appeared frequently at the Opera de Nice. He has conducted the London Mozart Players, the City of London Sinfonia, I Virtuosi di Santa Cecilia, the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra, the Dessau State Orchestra and has recently

recorded with the Ulster and BBC Symphony Orchestras. His CD's of Vaughan Williams' *The Pilgrim's Progress* appeared in 1993. In 1994, he becomes guest conductor of the South West German Radio Orchestra.



BIOGRAPHIES

EMMANUEL JOEL – Conductor

Emmanuel Joel studied at the Paris Conservatoire and began his career as Assistant to Giuseppe Sinopoli in 1982, then was invited by the Opera de Lyon as Assistant Conductor on the French premiere of *Al Grand Sole Carico d'amore* of Luigi Nono. He was then Assistant to John Eliot Gardiner for *Les Boreades* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival. In 1983 he began his association with the Théâtre des Arts, Rouen where he conducted *La Traviata*, *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Ciboulette*, and *La Fille de Madame Angot*. In 1984 he became Chief Conductor at the Opera Nancy et de la Lorraine, where he conducted *Goyescas*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Francesca da Rimini*, *From the House of the Dead*, *La Fanciulla del West*, *Der Zigeuner Baron*, *Les Pecheurs de Perles* and *Sapho*. He also appears regularly at the Opera de Nantes where he has conducted *Tosca* and *Rigoletto* and in the current season will return for *Die Listige Witwe* and *Die Enführung*. He has just conducted *L'Etoile* for Opera Zuid at Maastricht. He conducted Boieldieu's *La Dame Blanche* at the Wexford Festival in 1990. He is currently conducting Offenbach's *Les Brigands* at the Paris Opera Bastille.



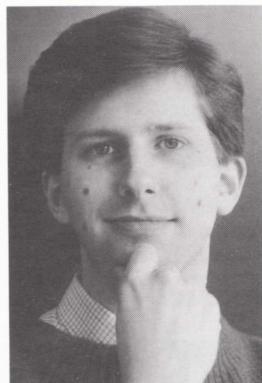
NICOLETTE MOLNÁR – Director

Nicolette Molnár was born in London and educated at Columbia University New York before studying directing under Götz Friedrich in Hamburg. After working in several American opera houses (St. Louis, Santa Fe and Houston) she returned to England where she works regularly with the English National Opera. For ENO, she has revived several productions including *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *Tosca*, *Salome*, *Falstaff*, *Street Scene* (which was filmed for television by the BBC), *The Love for Three Oranges*, in Lisbon and was Associate Director with Ken Russell for *Princess Ida* in 1992. Recent work includes her productions of Finnissey's *Vaudeville* at the Warsaw Autumn Festival, J. Strauss' *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (Annaberg, Germany), *L'Elisir d'amore* (Luzern) and Balfé's *The Rose of Castile* in Wexford, where she also directed the scenes at the 1990 Festival. Future plans include a new production of *Cosi fan tutte* for ENO in 1994.



PETER RUTHVEN HALL – Designer

Peter originally trained as an architect. He now works as a designer for the leading international design group, Imagination and as a stage designer in the theatre for musicals and plays as well as opera. Theatre work includes: designs for *Cosi fan tutte*, *Il Matrimonio Segreto* (Royal Academy of Music), the British premieres of Schubert's *Fierabras* and Camacho's *Wedding* by Mendelsohn (Oxford Playhouse), *Women of Troy*, *Vassa Zheleznova* (Gate Theatre, London) and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Oxford Playhouse). In musical theatre Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard* (Sydmonpton Festival), *Tutankhamun* (Imagination) and *Merrily we roll along* (English Touring Company). Costume designs for *The Turn of the Screw* (Opera Northern Ireland & Royal Northern College of Music) *Zar und Zimmermann* (Aachen Opera), *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte* (Vienna Kammeroper). For Imagination, work includes the sets for *Joy to the World* at the Royal Albert Hall for the past four years, also broadcast on BBC 1.



BIOGRAPHIES

DAVID COLMER – Lighting Designer

Has worked extensively with the Oxford Playhouse Company for whom he has lit over twenty-five major productions including *Happy End*, *Playboy of the West Indies*, *King Lear*, *Peer Gynt*, *Mephisto*, *The Crucible*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Oedipus Plays* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. West End productions include *Confusions*, *Alice's Boys* and *West*. David has also designed lighting for the Tricycle Theatre including *Burning Point*, *Trinidad Sisters*, *Great White Hope*,

Pentecost, *The Hostage*, *A Free Country* and *Once a Catholic*. Other companies include Cambridge Theatre Company, Theatre Royal York, Stephen Berkoff and Michael Codron. Musical productions include *Orlando*, *Cosi fan tutte*, *Marriage of Figaro* for Opera 80, also *Die Fledermaus*, *Carmen*, *Threepenny Opera* and Billie Holliday's *All or Nothing at All*. The most unusual job undertaken was lighting a song and dance festival in a Roman Amphitheatre on the shores of the Mediterranean at Leptis Magna in Libya.

This is his fourth season as lighting designer for DGOS Opera Ireland, following his first for Wexford Festival Opera.



MARY ANNE KRAUS – Choreographer/Associate Director

Mary Anne was born in London and grew up in New York. Having trained in classical Ballet with New York City Ballet and Robert Joffrey, she performed with both these companies. Returning to England she had a distinguished performing career with London Festival Ballet, The Royal Shakespeare Company and English National Opera. As a costume designer, Mary Anne designed for Maurice Bejart, for the Ballet of the Twentieth Century (Brussels) and the Comédie Francaise (Paris). Starting out in choreography, she assisted on productions for the Royal Shakespeare Company, English National Opera, the Lyric Opera Chicago and West End musicals. As a choreographer she worked on the *The King & I* (Watford Palace), *The Rake's Progress* (Bloomsbury Festival), *Der Freischütz* and *The Magic Flute* (Opera Box), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Wales and more recently *The Marriage of Figaro* and *La Bohème* (British Youth Opera, Sadler's Wells). She was associate director for Michael Hunt's production of *Freischütz* and Brendan Wheatley's *The Magic Flute* both for Opera Box.



GERALD MARTIN MOORE—Repetiteur

Was born in Scotland and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music before winning a scholarship to study at the National Opera Studio in London. Since leaving the Opera Studio, he has worked as a vocal coach and accompanist to many leading singers, including Ileana Cotrubas, Marie McLaughlin, Anne Howells and Valerie Masterson. He has worked as a guest coach for all the major British opera companies and is a frequent recitalist. A particular interest in bel canto and 19th century French opera has led to several engagements for Wexford Festival, Amsterdam Radio, Théâtre de Chatelet in Paris and Wigmore Hall recitals. He recently made his stage debut in the European premiere of Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* and has recorded the role for Decca. Future engagements include *Orlando* in Paris, *Il re pastore* in Lyons, recitals in Paris, Covent Garden and *Zauberflöte* at the '94 Aix-en-Provence Festival.



BIOGRAPHIES

MARY CALLAN-CLARKE - Soprano

Mary Callan-Clarke was born in Galway and studied at University College Dublin, Dublin College of Music with Veronica Dunne and the Royal College of Music, London. Operatic roles include Karolka/Barena *Jenůfa* for Scottish Opera, Despina *Cosi fan tutte* for Scottish Opera and for DGOS Opera Ireland, Sandrina *L'Infedelta Delusa* for Opera Theatre Company and RTE television, Rowena *Der Templer und die Jüdin* at the Wexford Festival and for Welsh National Opera Agathe *Der Freischütz*, First Lady *Die Zauberflöte*, Gilda *Rigoletto* and Mimi *La Bohème*.



MERIEL DICKINSON - Mezzo Soprano

Meriel Dickinson was born in Lytham St. Annes and studied at the Royal Manchester College of Music and the Vienna Academy. She is one of Britain's most versatile singers, with a career which embraces opera, concerts, theatre and musicals. In addition Meriel is the mezzo soprano in the avant-garde vocal group Electric Phoenix, with whom she appears throughout Europe and the USA. Her operatic repertoire includes many Handel roles, Larina *Onegin*, Amneris *Aida* and several Gilbert and Sullivan parts. With her brother, the composer and pianist Peter Dickinson she has made many recordings of 20th century songs. With Opera North she sang Magdalene in *Maskarade*; with Scottish Opera and English National Opera Mrs. Jones in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*. In 1992/93 she was seen on BBC 2 in *Street Scene* and gave concerts in New York, Milan, Paris and Mulhouse. She was last in Dublin in April adjudicating the Ulster Bank Music Prize.



ELIZABETH FUTRAL - Soprano

The American soprano Elizabeth Futral makes her European operatic debut with these performances of *Lakmé*. She is acclaimed for her richly coloured voice, notably in performances of Gilda in *Rigoletto* and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, for which she was named "1992 Debut Artist of the Year" at the New York City Opera. Future projects include Florestine in *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Cunegonde in *Candide* with the Lyric Opera of Chicago; Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* with the Greater Miami Opera; the World Premiere of Judith Weir's *The Story of Blond Eckbert* with the Santa Fe Opera; Amor in *Orphée et Eurydice* in Geneva; and Gilda in *Rigoletto* with the Edmonton Opera. She will also record scenes from Kurt Weill's *The Firebrand of Florence* for EMI opposite Thomas Hampson. She has appeared in concert with Daniel Barenboim, Leonard Slatkin, Raymond Leppard, Yves Abel, Robert Shaw and Gustav Kuhn and will sing this season with the San Francisco Symphony, the Netherlands Radio Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Orchestra Regionale Toscana, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.



DONALD GEORGE – Tenor

Born in San Francisco, California and grew up in New Orleans. He has sung in many of the major opera houses of Europe such as the Theatre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, Komische Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Hamburg, Staatsoper Berlin, National Theatre Madrid, Liceu Barcelona, etc. as well as festivals including Istanbul, Bregenz, Salzburg and Wexford. He sang the first German performance of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* which he repeated in London with the composer conducting. He has worked with conductors such as Giuseppe Sinopoli, Emil Tchakarov, Sir Colin Davis, Zubin Mehta, Gustav Kuhn, Kurt Masur, Christoph von Dohnanyi. He toured Japan singing Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with the Berlin Komische Oper. He has made various recordings including *Elijah* with Kurt Masur, Verdi's *Alzira* with Lamberto Gardelli, *Salomé* with Zubin Mehta, *Manon Lescaut* with Alexander Rahbari, the Schubert Song Cycle 'Die Schöne Müllerin' and the Duke in *Eine Nacht in Venedig* by J Strauss for Belgian TV. A solo CD of works by American composers (Barber, Joplin, Foster etc) is also being planned, as is a Christmas release of European Christmas melodies.



KATE McCARNEY – Mezzo Soprano

Born in Belfast and studied at the Belfast School of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music and the National Opera Studio. She currently studies with Audrey Langford. Her roles include Hermia *Midsummer Night's Dream* for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Cherubino *Marriage of Figaro* for New Israeli Opera, Arsace *Semiramide* for Pocket Opera of Nuremberg, Carmen for Opera 80, Olga *Eugene Onegin* for Kentish Opera and Margaret *Wozzeck* for Opera North. She has sung the title role in *La Cenerentola* and Suzuki *Madama Butterfly* for Scottish Opera-Go-Round as well as Mercedes *Carmen* for Scottish Opera. Roles for Welsh National Opera include Dryad *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Rosina *Barber of Seville*, Mercedes and the title role in *Carmen*. Kate has sung with English National Opera, at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and the festivals of Wexford, Buxton and Batignano, Italy. She has also sung Siëbel *Faust* for Opera N. Ireland, Meg Page *Falstaff* and *Carmen* for Opera Theatre Company and Dorabella *Cosi fan tutte* for Castleward Opera. Future plans include Rosina in Belfast and Larina *Eugene Onegin* for Opera North.



ROISIN McGIBBON – Mezzo Soprano

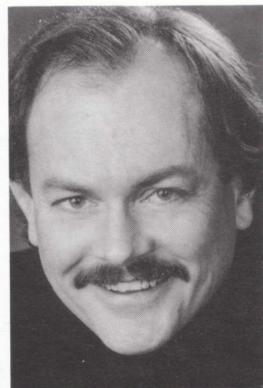
Roisin McGibbon, born and educated in Northern Ireland, studied singing in London at the Guildhall School and the National Opera Studio. After a number of years singing as a soprano, she recently confirmed her decision to continue her career as a mezzo soprano. Roisin has represented Northern Ireland in the "Cardiff Singer of the World" Competition and has made many television and radio broadcasts for BBC and RTE. She made her Queen's Festival debut in a recital of Schumann and Liszt songs which was broadcast by RTE. Roisin made her Wexford Festival debut singing Wirtstochter in Humperdinck's *Königskinder* and Roggiero in *Tancredi* by Rossini. Recently she sang the title role in Holst's *Savitri* in Aix-en-Provence. Other operatic roles include Cathleen in Maw's *The Rising of the Moon* and Lazuli in Chabrier's *L'Etoile*. Recent performances include Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and a recital in St. John's, Smith Square.



BIOGRAPHIES

MARK PEDROTTI – Baritone

Mark Pedrotti appears throughout North America, Australia and Europe. Widely acclaimed in oratorio, his performances include appearances with the Toronto Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Montreal Symphony, the Boston Symphony and the South West German Radio Orchestra with such distinguished conductors as Charles Dutoit, Sir David Willcocks, Andrew Davis and Helmut Rilling. In New York's renowned Carnegie Hall he has been heard in Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Handel's *Messiah*, Smetana's *Libuse* and *Le Roi d'Ys Lalo*. In addition, he has appeared with the New York City Opera, Canadian Opera, Edmonton, Vancouver, Cincinnati, Washington, Fort Worth, Calgary and Utah Operas, Opera Northern Ireland, Auckland Opera, Victoria State Opera, Canterbury Opera (New Zealand) and Lyric Opera of Queensland. Recently he sang the role of Figaro in Paisiello's *Barber of Seville* at the Wexford Festival. Future engagements include Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* for the Canadian Opera Company, Valentin in *Faust* for Michigan Opera Theatre, Germont in *La Traviata* at Auckland Opera and *Messiah* in Quebec. His new CD, "The Lyrical Art of Mark Pedrotti", is available on CBC Records.



GEORGI SELEZNEV – Bass

He was born in Tbilisi, Georgia, where he began his vocal and musical studies at the local conservatory at the age of nineteen. Thereafter, he transferred to the prestigious Leningrad Conservatory, where he graduated and was awarded the Lenin Prize. He was appointed principal bass soloist with the Maly Opera in Leningrad. In 1978, he was invited to the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, where he remains today. His first guest appearance in the West was in 1985, when he sang Kontchak and Galitz in *Prince Igor* at Trieste. Such was his success that he was immediately re-engaged as Dosifei in *Khovanschina* the following season. He also sang the title role in *Salambo* for RAI in Rome and recorded the opera for RCA. He has also recorded Oroveso in *Norma* for Olympia Records. He has appeared in all the international tours of the Bolshoi Company in recent years where his successes have led to prestigious engagements such as Verdi's *Requiem* under Mo. Chailly in Amsterdam, Oroveso at the Opera Pacific and as Boris at the Wiesbaden Festival and as Pimen at the Opera du Rhin, Strasbourg and again at Bordeaux in March 1992.



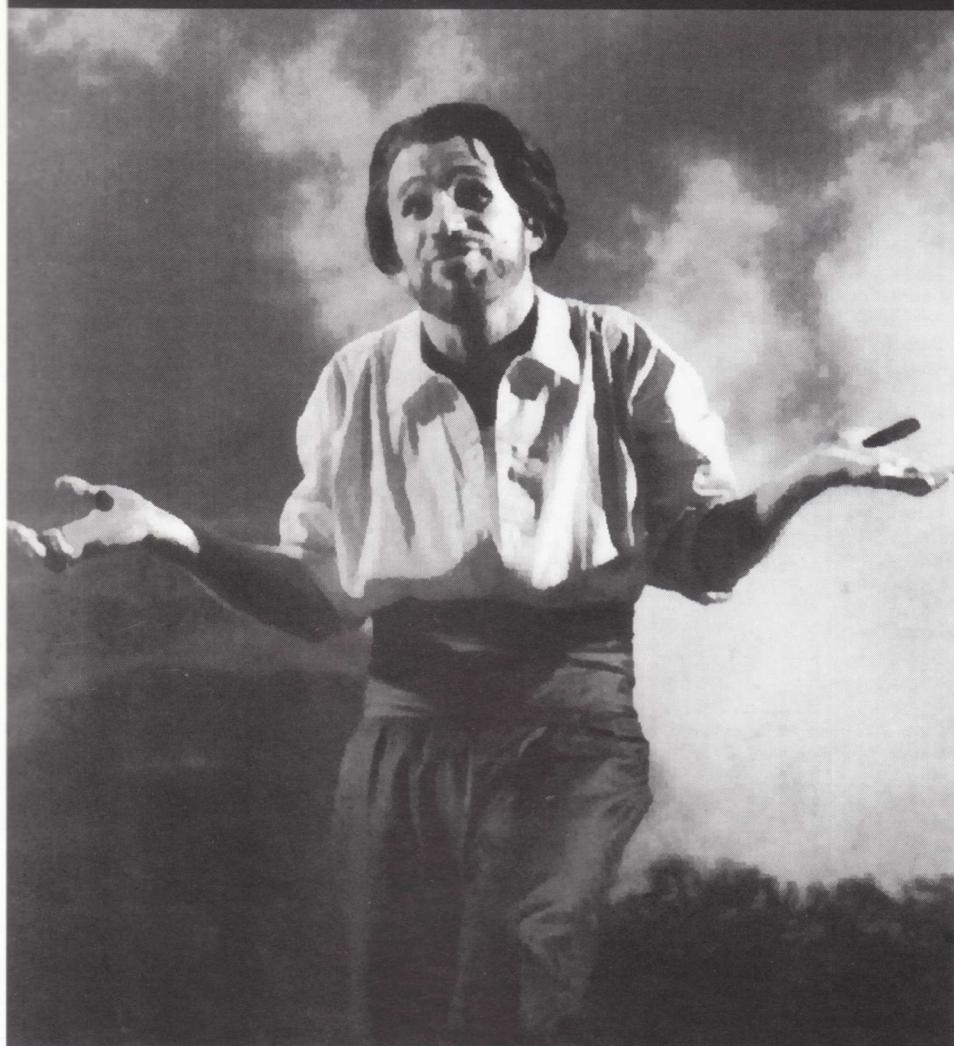
YA LIN ZHANG – Tenor

Ya Lin Zhang was born in Tianjing, China in 1962. He studied at the Tianjing Conservatory of Music followed by two years at the Royal College of Music in London on a full scholarship. In 1991 he won first prize in the Clonter Opera Farm competition and this led to a number of concerts and the role of Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. This was followed by operatic gala concerts in Bedale Hall and London University. At the Royal College of Music Ya Lin's opera roles to date have been Rodolfo, Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment*, Don José in *Carmen* attended by H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, and Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*. In the 1992-3 season Ya Lin was the tenor chosen for the Pavarotti Masterclasses in London, gave concerts in Spain, Germany and Austria, sang operatic arias on Classic FM radio and was tenor soloist on Richard Baker's Classical Music Cruise for P & O in the Mediterranean. He also sang in this year's Wexford Festival Operatic Scenes.



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We also maintain a range of vital social services in both rural and urban areas. For this we receive a £4 million payment from the Government.

And, through the School Bus service, we're responsible for bringing 165,000

children to school every day. This includes 9,000 students who have special needs and we cater for them.

Then, of course, there are the 60,000 tourists and holidaymakers who take trips ranging from one day excursions to two week tours.

Today, Bus Éireann provides 2,500 jobs with an additional 1,800 subcontracted. Our total revenue for the year 1992 was over £90 million. We look forward to building on this by the time we're 7 and our mascot is 49.

BUS ÉIREANN
we're on the move